Flight In The Dark

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She left the club at eleven thirty and began walking the short distance back to her hotel. Normally she'd have called a cab, but it was such a lovely night, (hot though not oppressively so), full moon and a clear, black, star-speckled sky that it would have been a sin to waste it. That was her undoing; if she'd taken a cab she'd have been safe, out of his clutches forever. She'd barely covered a hundred yards when she realised her mistake, but by then it was too late.

Something made her stop and listen, perhaps it was only the echo of her own stiletto heels on the hard concrete, perhaps it was something else, a supranormal perception, an inexplicable awareness, or simply woman's intuition, but whatever it was, it was real: she knew that she was not alone. Turning suddenly, she saw him and, suppressing a squeak of terror, caught her breath.

"You!" she uttered.

"Yes, baby: me," he replied.

"Wh-what do you want?"

"Oh, I think you know that," he said in his lazy Southern drawl, and held it up in his right hand.

She fancied she saw it glimmer in the moonlight; could this be? No matter, she knew it was.

"Is, is...?" she stammered.

"Yes baby."

He advanced on her, holding it out menacingly.

She backed off as he drew nearer.

"There's no escaping now, baby," he said, "why don't you come here and get it over with?"

"No, no, no!" her voice rose to a crescendo.

She turned and ran blindly. Her high heels struck sparks on the road as she fled in stark terror, knowing that he was in hot pursuit. She ran towards the alley, her breathing laboured, and darted down it. He was barely twenty yards behind her; she had to escape, but suddenly it was all over, and she knew it: the alley was a dead end. Catching her breath, she ran up against the wall, her stiletto twisted under her, and she fell heavily.

“Oh,” she cried.

A moment later he was standing over her, he too was breathing heavily, and holding that foul thing in his hand. She struggled to her feet and backed up against the wall. His eyes glowed eerily in the full moon’s light.

“No,” she moaned, “please, not that, please.”

“I’m afraid so, baby. Don’t struggle; it won’t hurt.”

He reached out with his left hand and tugged at her tight sweater. Then, with one powerful thrust of his right hand, he shoved it right down the front of her dress.

“Oh,” she shuddered, and nearly fainted.

“Be there at ten am, Monday,” he said, “or there’ll be a warrant out for you.”

He turned and walked back up the alley.

She pulled the disgusting thing out from under her sweater and read the label by starlight.

Subpoena to appear before the Grand Jury, Little Rock, Arkansas, 27th August inst.

“Fink,” she shouted after him, “no good, stinkin’ fink!”